T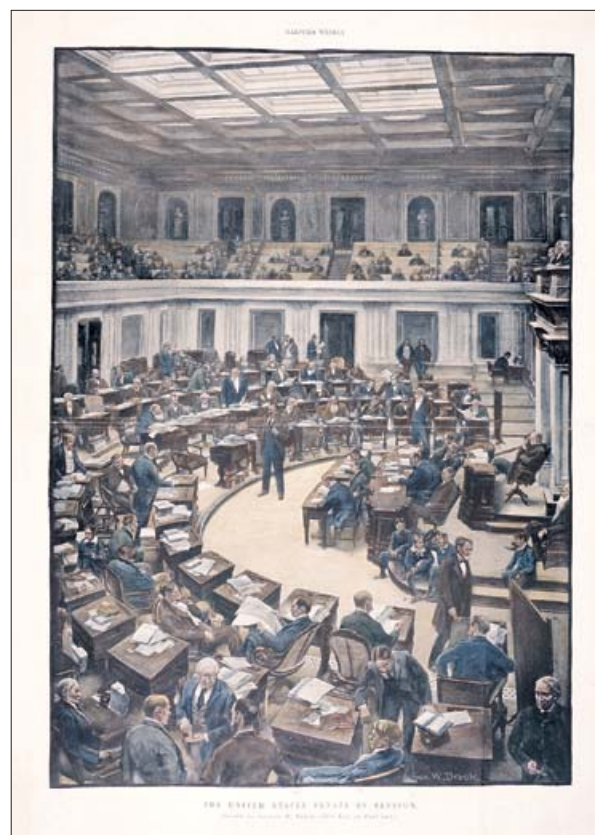his 1894 engraving shows the Senate Chamber during a typical session in the late 19th century. Senators occupy their desks, some listening to the proceedings, while others talk with one another or attend to business. During this time, only powerful committee chairmen had personal offices, and thus members spent much of their day at their desks doing work. Senate pages can be seen sitting at the rostrum awaiting a call from a member. The position of Senate page was first created in 1829. By the turn of the century, the Senate employed at least 17 young boys as pages. Dressed in knickers and jackets, they spent their days running errands for the senators, announcing impending votes, placing papers and pens on the senators' desks, and delivering messages throughout the city. Visitors watch the proceedings from the galleries, and three press reporters can be seen above the presiding officer's desk taking notes. The elaborate 19th-century Victorian interior shown in this image was significantly changed as part of a 1950s renovation. The original stained glass ceiling was found to be dangerously weak and had to be replaced; at the same time, the interior was altered to reflect a Federal-period look. ༄

The United States Senate in Session.

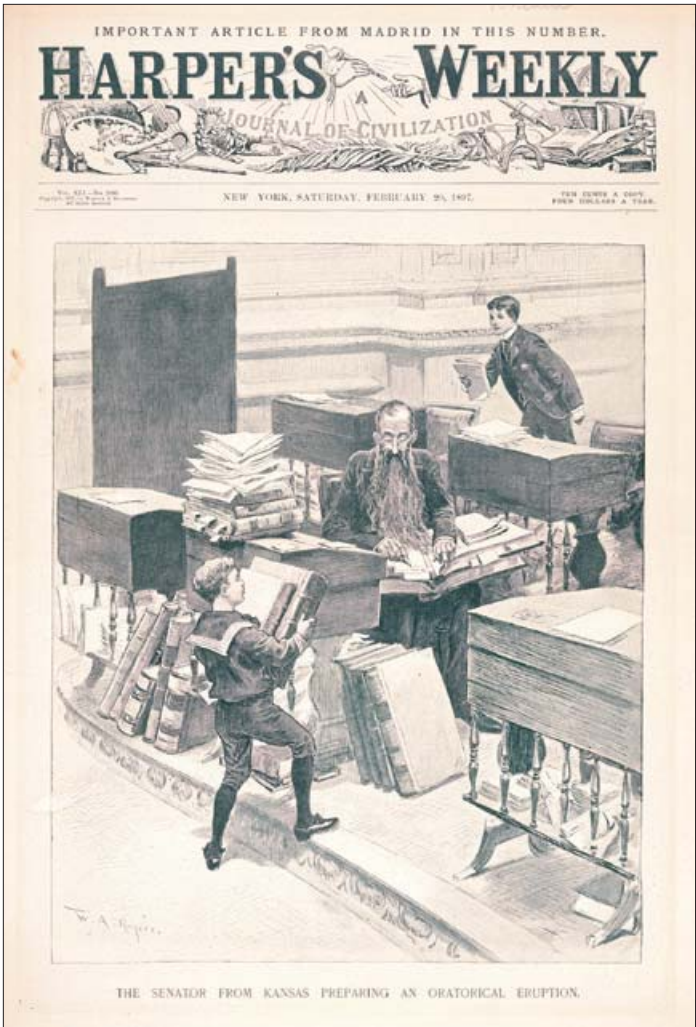Unidentified after George W. Breck after photograph by William Kurtz
Harper's Weekly, 09/22/1894
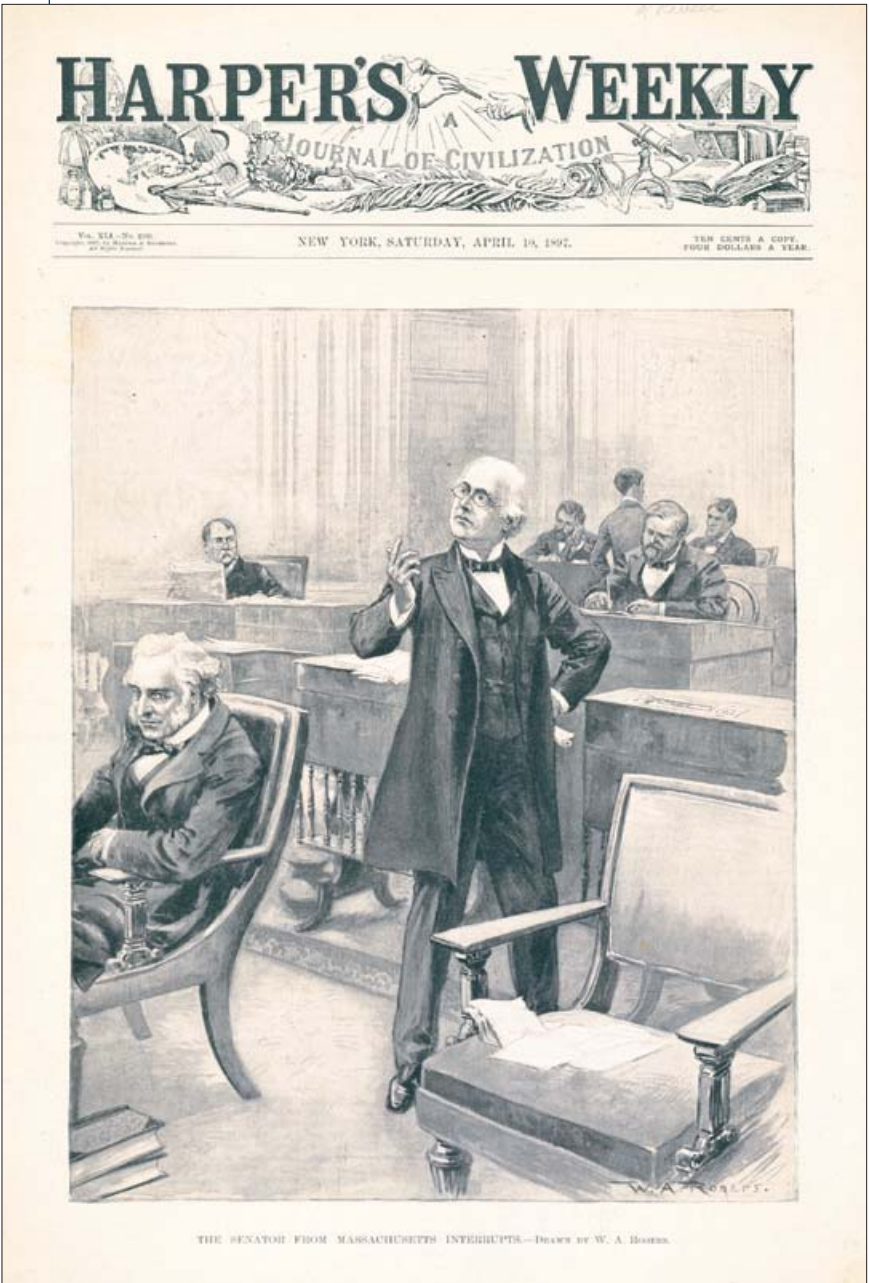Halftone, colored
19 ½ x 13 ¾ inches (49.5 x 34.9 cm)
Cat. no. 38.00032.005
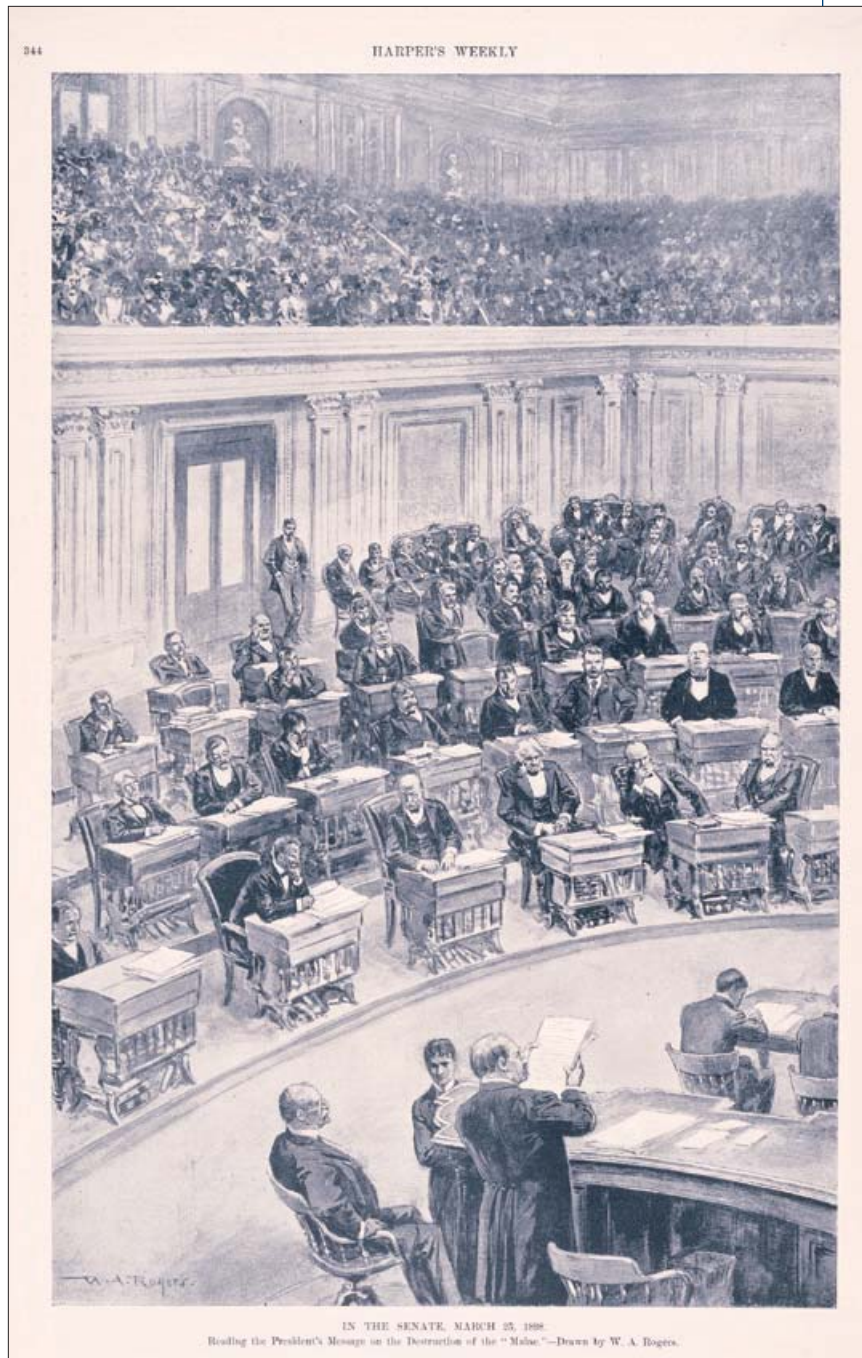
See appendix p. 481 for key

The Senator from Kansas Preparing an Oratorical Eruption.

Unidentified after William Allen Rogers
Harper's Weekly, 02/20/1897
Halftone, black and white
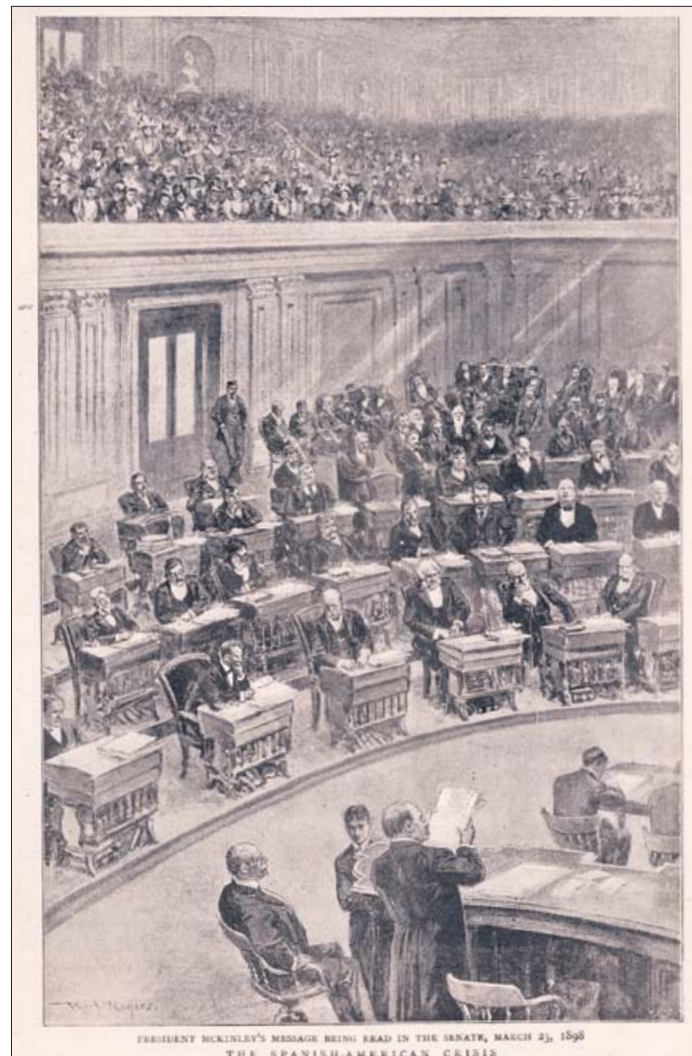11 x 8 ⁷⁄₁₆ inches (27.9 x 21.4 cm)
Cat. no. 38.00140.001

The Senator from Massachusetts Interrupts.

Unidentified after William Allen Rogers
Harper's Weekly, 04/10/1897
Halftone, black and white
11 ⅛ x 8 ½ inches (28.3 x 21.6 cm)
Cat. no. 38.00142.001

IN THE SENATE, MARCH 25, 1898.
Reading the President's Message on the Destruction of the "Maine."—Drawn by W. A. Rogers.
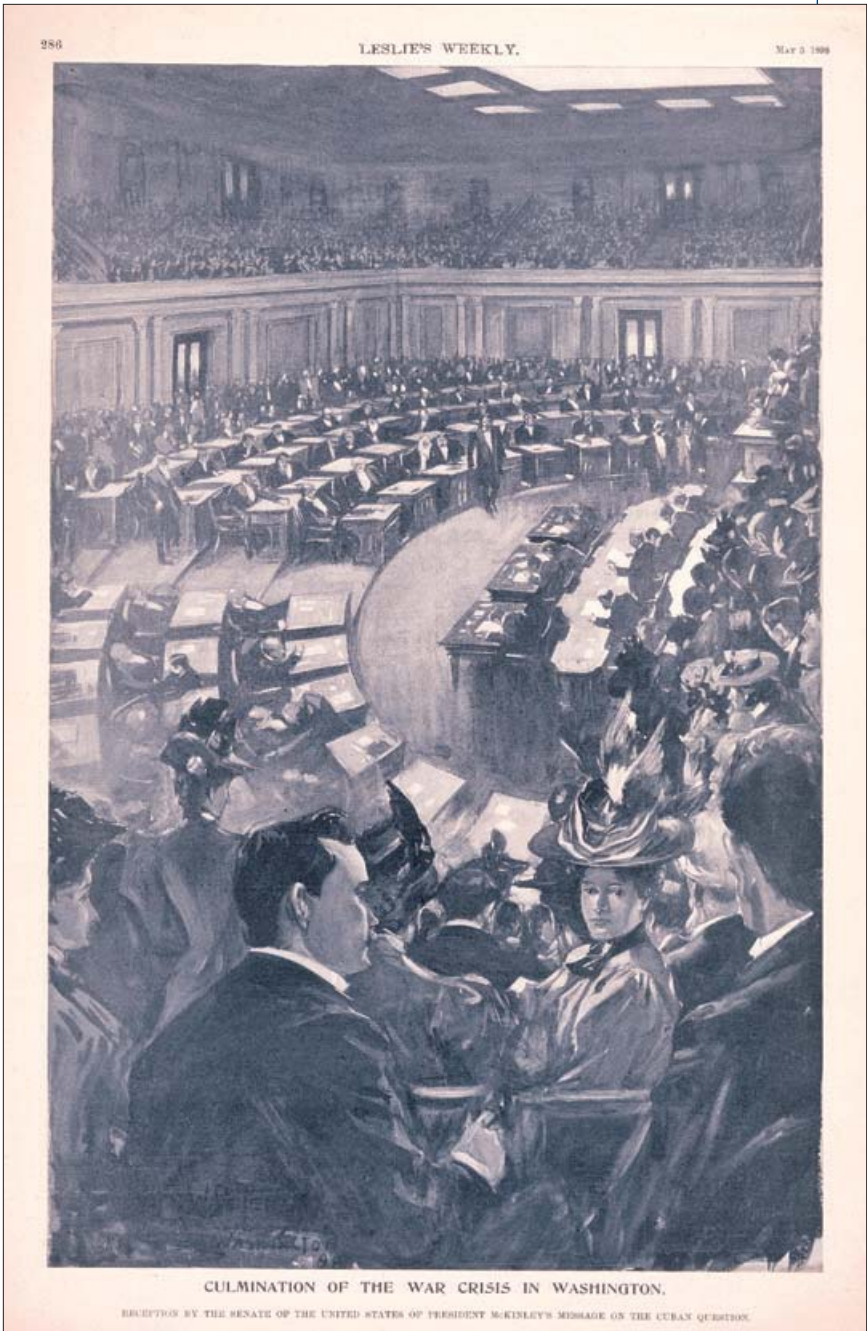
In the Senate, March 25, 1898.

Unidentified after William Allen Rogers
Harper's Weekly, 04/09/1898
Halftone, black and white
14 x 8 ½ inches (35.6 x 21.6 cm)
Cat. no. 38.00212.001

PRESIDENT MCKINLEY'S MESSAGE BEING READ IN THE SENATE, MARCH 25, 1898
THE SPANISH-AMERICAN CRISIS

President McKinley's Message Being Read in the Senate, March 25, 1898 / The Spanish-American Crisis

Unidentified after William Allen Rogers
The Graphic, 04/23/1898
Halftone, black and white
9 ¼ x 5 ¹¹⁄₁₆ inches (23.5 x 14.4 cm)
Cat. no. 38.00385.001

CULMINATION OF THE WAR CRISIS IN WASHINGTON.

RECEPTION BY THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES OF PRESIDENT McKINLEY'S MESSAGE ON THE CUBAN QUESTION.
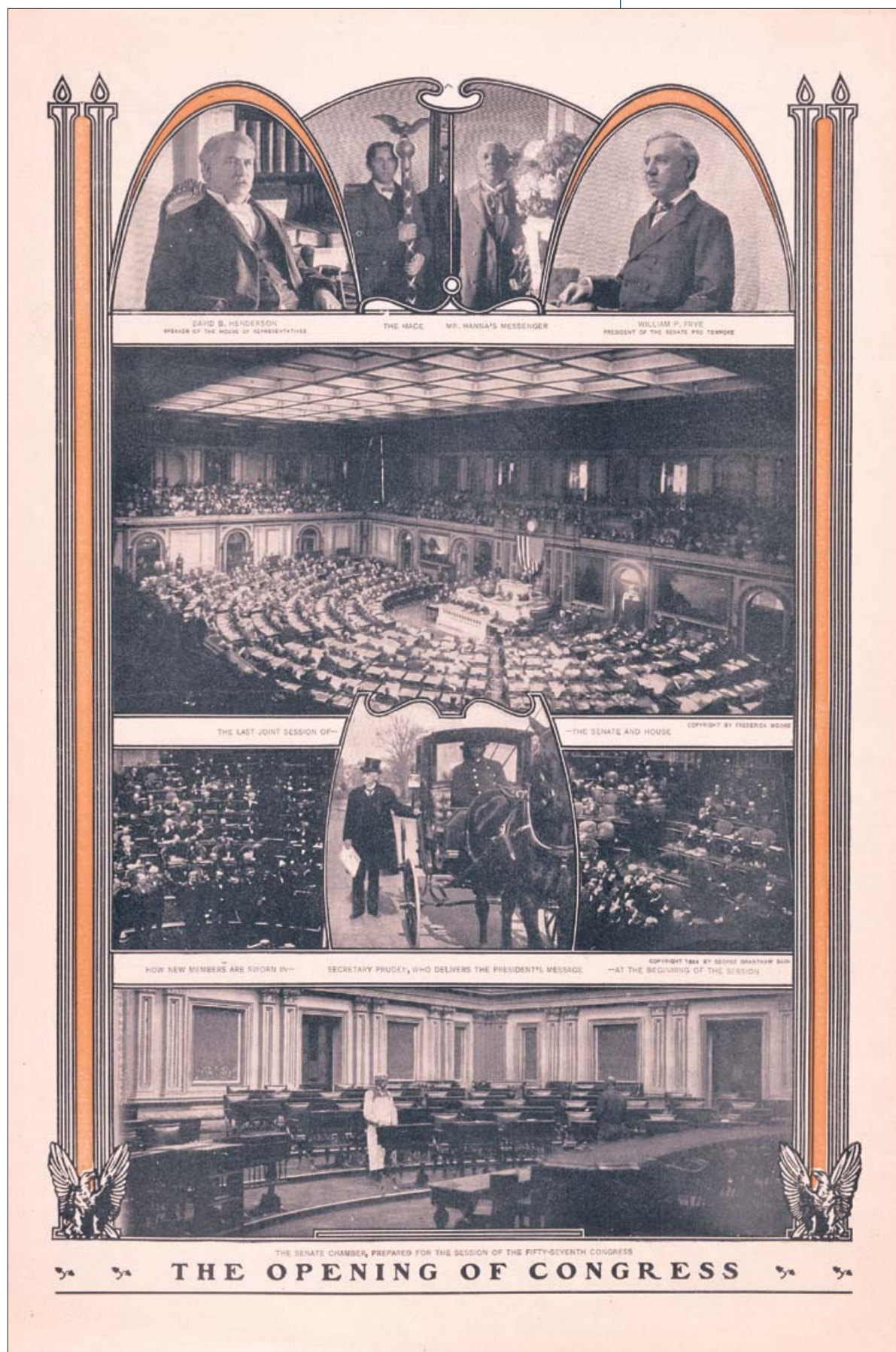
Culmination of the War Crisis in Washington.

Unidentified after G. W. Peters
Leslie's Weekly, 05/05/1898
Lithograph, black and white
14 ¾ x 9 inches (37.5 x 22.9 cm)
Cat. no. 38.00234.001

SWEARING IN THE VICE-PRESIDENT

This ceremony was performed in the Senate Chamber at noon, March 4, the oath of office being administered to Theodore Roosevelt by Senator William P. Frye, President pro tempore of the Senate
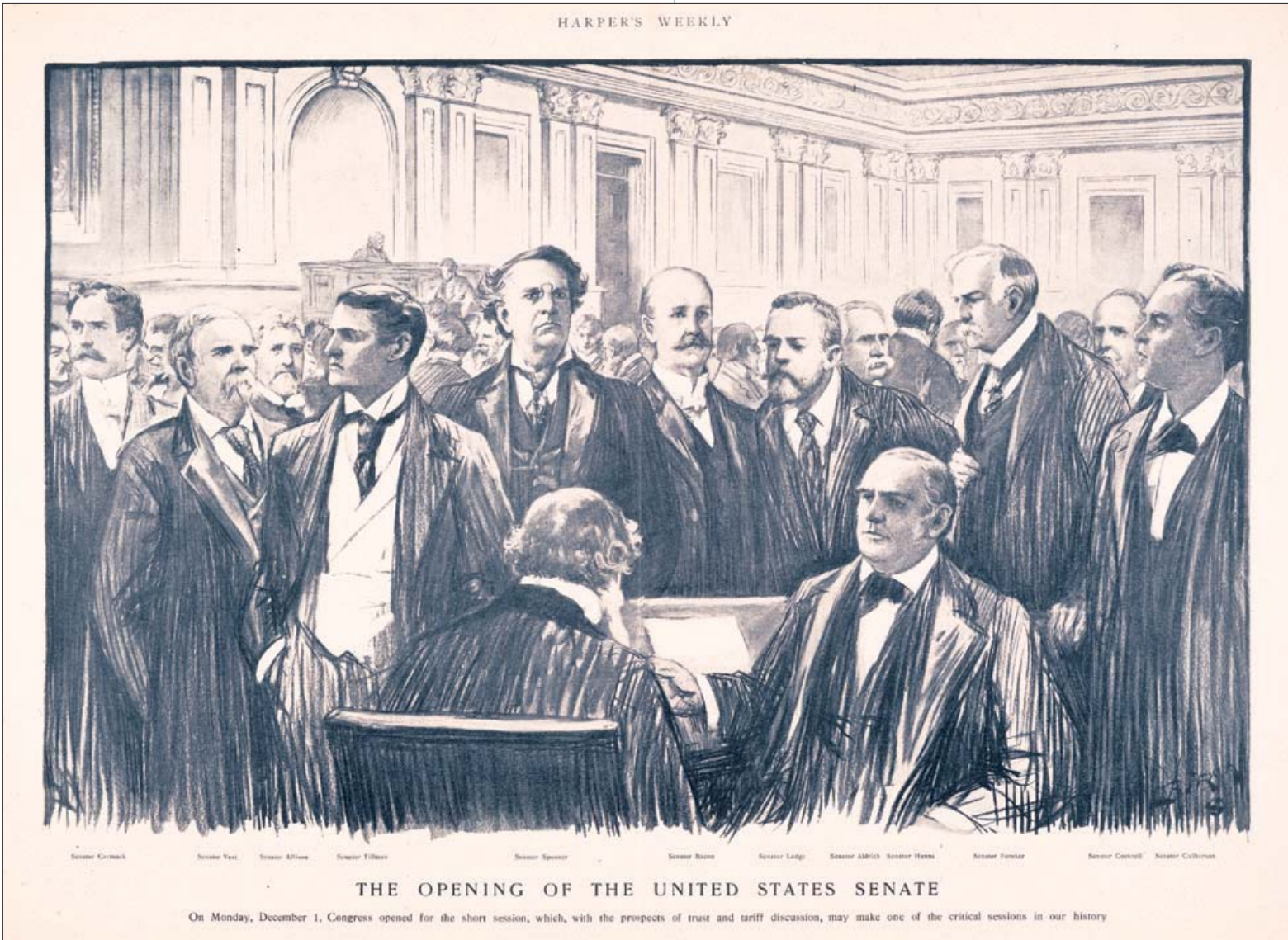
Swearing in the Vice-President

Unidentified after William D. Stevens
Harper's Weekly, 03/09/1901
Halftone, blue and white
10 ¼ x 9 inches (26.0 x 22.9 cm)
Cat. no. 38.00591.001

THE OPENING OF CONGRESS

The Opening of Congress

Unidentified
Collier's, 11/30/1901
Halftone, colored
14 ¼ x 9 ¼ inches (36.2 x 23.5 cm)
Cat. no. 38.00650.001

HARPER'S WEEKLY

THE OPENING OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE

On Monday, December 1, Congress opened for the short session, which, with the prospects of trust and tariff discussion, may make one of the critical sessions in our history
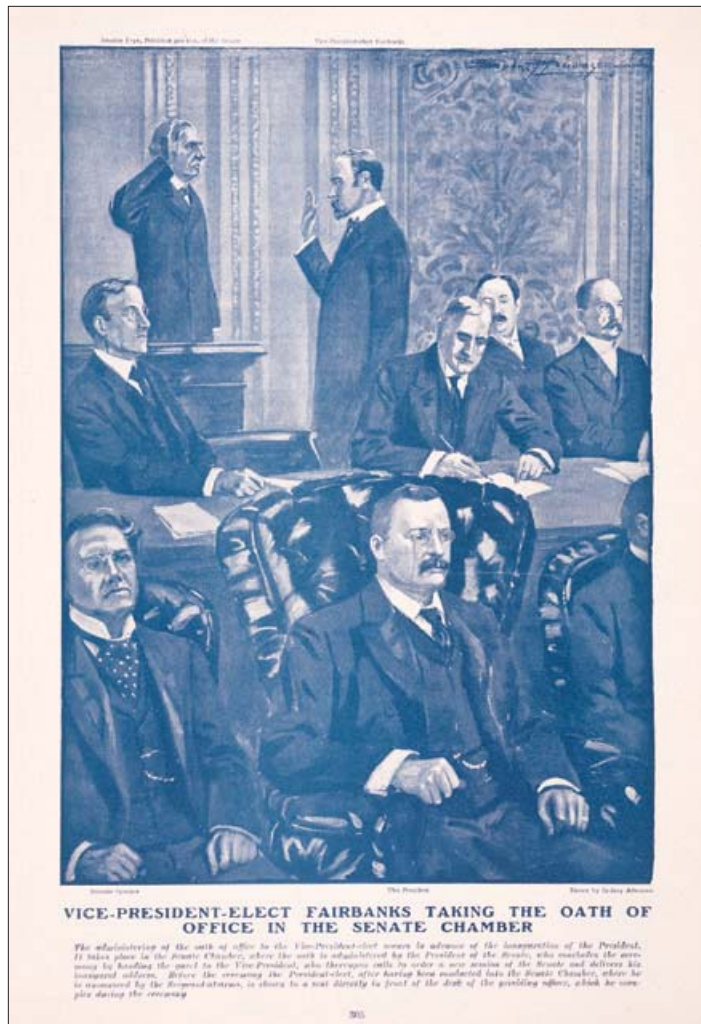
The Opening of the United States Senate

Unidentified after Birch
Harper's Weekly, 12/13/1902
Halftone, black and white
11 ⅜ x 15 ⅞ inches (28.9 x 40.3 cm)
Cat. no. 38.00135.001

Senate Chamber in the Capitol, Washington, D.C.

Unidentified
H.C. White Co., 1901
Photograph, black and white
3 ⅜ x 6 ⅛ inches (8.6 x 15.6 cm)
Cat. no. 38.00711.001

VICE-PRESIDENT-ELECT FAIRBANKS TAKING THE OATH OF OFFICE IN THE SENATE CHAMBER

Vice-President-Elect Fairbanks Taking the Oath of Office in the Senate Chamber

Unidentified after Sydney Adamson
Harper's Weekly, 03/04/1905
Halftone, blue and white
11 x 7 ¼ inches (27.9 x 18.4 cm)
Cat. no. 38.00590.001

OPENING THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES WITH PRAYER.
THE REV. EDWARD EVERETT HALE, THE VENERABLE CHAPLAIN, INVOKING THE DAILY BLESSING ON THE MEMBERS OF THE UPPER BRANCH OF THE AMERICAN CONGRESS.

Opening the Senate of the United States with Prayer. The Rev. Edward Everett Hale, the Venerable Chaplain, Invoking the Daily Blessing on the Members of the Upper Branch of the American Congress.

Unidentified after T. Dart Walker
Leslie's Weekly, 01/12/1905
Halftone, colored
13 ½ x 9 inches (34.3 x 22.9 cm)
Cat. no. 38.00972.001